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From \_\_\_\_\_

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## RAHALL JOINS FIGHT TO PROTECT PELL GRANTS

Beckley, W. Va. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today announced that he has joined with several of his colleagues in an effort to exempt Pell Grants from the automatic sequestration as required by the Gramm-Rudman balanced budget law.

"Gramm-Rudman already exempts emergency programs aimed at helping the poor such as Medicaid, AFDC, Child Nutrition, and others," Rep. Rahall explained. "I believe that the Pell Grants program, the most successful and carefully targeted of the federal financial aid programs, should also be exempt."

Rahall has signed on as a cosponsor of legislation which would provide the exemption for the Pell Grants program.

"College costs have increased more in the last six years than they did during the previous sixteen years; yet Pell Grants have not kept pace, and fewer of the poorest students are going to school," Rahall pointed out. "A large majority of Pell recipients come from families with incomes below \$15,000 per year. We cannot afford to lose some of the nation's best minds simply because they are poor. If any federal program is a good investment, and so needed in West Virginia, this is it. If the federal government can help them finish college, the return on the investment in terms of future leadership will be a great one. The progress we have made in educational opportunity in the last twenty years is slipping away, and we should not underestimate the damage this could do in the next decades to our children, to our work force, to our economy, and the security of our nation."